

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS: A STUDY ON THEIR INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BRAND PREFERENCE FOR HOME APPLIANCES

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ABSTRACT

Celebrity endorsements play a crucial role in shaping consumer brand preferences, particularly in the home appliance sector. By leveraging the trust, credibility, and emotional connections that celebrities have with their audiences, brands can enhance their visibility and perceived quality. This paper explores the mechanisms through which celebrity endorsements influence consumer behaviour and examines case studies of successful endorsements.

KEYWORDS: Celebrity endorsements, consumer behaviour, brand preference, home appliances, marketing strategy.

CONUNDRUM OF THE STUDY

In today's competitive market, brands are constantly seeking innovative ways to capture consumer attention and build loyalty. One effective strategy is the use of celebrity endorsements, a practice where well-known public figures promote a brand's products or services. In the home appliance industry, where purchasing decisions are often significant investments, the influence of celebrity endorsements can be particularly profound. Celebrities bring a unique combination of trustworthiness, visibility, and emotional connection that can elevate a brand's image and appeal.

Consumers tend to trust the opinions and choices of celebrities they admire, associating their positive attributes with the endorsed products. This can lead to increased brand awareness, perceived quality, and ultimately, consumer preference. This paper delves into the dynamics of celebrity endorsements and their impact on consumer brand preferences for home appliances. It examines the psychological and social factors at play, supported by case studies of successful endorsements. By understanding these influences, brands can better strategize their marketing efforts to effectively reach and resonate with their target audience.

Influence of Celebrity Endorsements

1. Credibility and Trustworthiness

Celebrities often bring a sense of credibility and trustworthiness to a brand. Consumers tend to trust recommendations from people they admire or feel familiar with, which can be particularly effective for high-involvement purchases like home appliances.

2. Increased Brand Awareness

When a celebrity endorses a product, it gains immediate visibility. This increased brand awareness can be crucial in competitive markets where consumers have many choices. A well-known face can make a brand stand out.

3 Emotional Connection

Celebrities can create an emotional connection with consumers. This connection can translate into brand loyalty, as consumers might associate positive feelings they have towards the celebrity with the product they are endorsing.

4 Perceived Quality

The association with a celebrity can enhance the perceived quality of a product. If a well-respected celebrity endorses a home appliance, consumers might believe that the product is of high quality, reliable, and worth investing in.

5 Social Influence

Celebrity endorsements can also leverage social influence. Consumers may want to emulate the lifestyle of their favorite celebrities, including the products they use. This desire to imitate can drive purchasing decisions.

6 Targeted Marketing

Celebrities often have a specific demographic that follows them. Brands can use this to their advantage by choosing endorsers whose audience matches their target market. For example, a home appliance brand targeting young families might choose a celebrity who is seen as a family-oriented figure

Examples of Celebrity Endorsements in Home Appliances

- **LG and Priyanka Chopra**

Priyanka Chopra has been a brand ambassador for LG, helping to promote their range of home appliances. Her global appeal and credibility have helped LG reach a broader audience and enhance its brand image.

- GE Appliances and Ellen DeGeneres

Ellen DeGeneres has partnered with GE Appliances, featuring their products on her show and in her social media. Her endorsement helps GE connect with a wide audience, leveraging her popularity and trustworthiness.

- Samsung and various global celebrities

Samsung has used various celebrities, including athletes and actors, to endorse their home appliances. These endorsements have helped Samsung maintain a high-profile image and connect with diverse consumer segments.

Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsements

The effectiveness of celebrity endorsements can vary based on several factors:

- Relevance: The celebrity's image should align with the brand's values and target audience.
- Authenticity: Consumers can tell if an endorsement is genuine or purely commercial. Authentic endorsements are more effective.
- Consistency: Continuous association with a celebrity can reinforce brand recall and loyalty.
- Marketing Mix: Celebrity endorsements should be part of a broader, well-rounded marketing strategy, including digital marketing, social media engagement, and traditional advertising.

REVIEWS RELEVANT TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

The researcher has found a significant finding related to literary reviews to this proposed topic that there are so many Indian literatures and studies available but not so much available on international literatures. Here are some reviews relevant to the research study:

Sharma, R., & Singh, J. (2021) focuses on consumer perception of celebrity endorsements in the Indian home appliance industry, revealing that endorsements by TV celebrities are particularly effective in rural areas.

Amos, C., et. al.. (2008) investigates the relationship between celebrity endorsement effects and advertising effectiveness, highlighting how endorsements can enhance brand equity and consumer preferences.

Mishra, P., & Pandey, A. (2019) investigates the impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer buying behavior in India's home appliance market, concluding that endorsements by sports celebrities enhance brand trust and purchase intention.

Spry, A., et.al. (2011) examines the impact of celebrity endorsement on brand credibility and brand equity, providing insights into how endorsements can influence consumer perceptions and brand loyalty.

Till, B. D., & Busler, M. (2000) explore the match-up hypothesis, examining how the fit between a celebrity endorser and a product influences brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The study's findings are relevant to the home appliance sector.

Kumar, A., & Ramaswamy, V. (2020) investigates the role of celebrity endorsements in marketing home appliances in India, showing that endorsements lead to higher brand recall and consumer confidence.

Desai, S., & Bhatt, K. (2017) analyze the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase decisions in the home appliance sector, finding that endorsements by film stars significantly influence urban consumers.

Choi, S. M., & Rifon, N. J. (2012) explore the impact of congruence between a celebrity's image and the consumer's ideal self on the effectiveness of endorsements, relevant to understanding consumer preferences in the home appliance market.

Joshi, R., & Ahluwalia, M. (2018) explores how celebrity endorsements affect brand loyalty among Indian consumers, focusing on the home appliance sector. It concludes that endorsements by popular Bollywood stars significantly enhance consumer trust and loyalty.

Gupta, P. (2019) examines the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer buying behaviour in India, with a specific focus on home appliances. The research highlights how endorsements by cricket stars increase brand preference among male consumers.

Erdogan, B. Z. (1999) discusses various aspects of celebrity endorsements, including credibility, attractiveness, and meaning transfer. It provides a theoretical framework applicable to various industries, including home appliances.

McCracken, G. (1989) paper explores the cultural foundations of celebrity endorsements and their impact on consumer behaviour. The study's insights are applicable to understanding the endorsement process in the home appliance market.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives framed by the researcher for the present study;

- To get to know about the general understanding on celebrity endorsements and their influence on consumer brand preference for home appliances
- To study the celebrity endorsement factors which influence the consumers on buying home appliances
- To get to know about common issues and concerns related to celebrity endorsements
- To provide practical recommendations and suggestions based on the findings of the study

All these objectives are carefully analysed theoretically and analytically by the researcher for better understanding of the present study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Research Design: The study is empirical in nature
- ❖ Data Collection: The data collected from the respondents through interview schedule
- ❖ Sampling method: The sampling method used to collect the data is simple random sampling technique.
- ❖ Data Analysis: Factor analysis have been used to analyse the collected data which includes KMO and Bartlett's Test, Component Matrix and Rotated Factor Matrix and Total Variance Explained using principal component analysis extraction method. Also, the researcher used Weighted Average Method to rank the common issues and concerns related to celebrity endorsements

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.836	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6430.248
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

*Source: SPSS Computed Output

The KMO test statistics in the above table for the “Celebrity Endorsement Factors” is 0.836, which means the factor analysis for the selected variables is found to be appropriate to the data. The Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity test value is 6430.248 at degrees of freedom 91 and statistically significant at 0.05 per cent confidence. This means that correlation matrix is not an identity matrix (there exists’ correlations between the variables).

Component Matrix and Rotated Factor Matrix

The component matrix is expressed as standardized variables in term of factors. These co-efficient values used to calculate respondents factor score in each dimension. Rotated factor loadings are important for the interpretation of the factors (Field 2000). For analytical convenient the researcher choose rotated matrix because Factor Matrix shows the factor loadings prior to rotation whereas the Rotated Factor Matrix shows the rotated factor loadings. A critical value has to be assigned in order to interpret the results. If the value is less than 0.50, the results of the factor analysis probably won't be very useful (Gonick and Smith, 1993). If the extracted factor loading is less than 0.5 is eliminated by the researcher, and if no values are lesser than the critical value, all the factors are used for further analysis. Table 2 shows the rotated component matrices for “Celebrity Endorsement Factors”.

Table 2
Rotated Component Matrix

Code	Celebrity Endorsement Factors	Component		
		1	2	3
CEF05	"I feel a personal connection to the brand because of the celebrity endorser."	.886		
CEF11	"The endorsement by this celebrity makes me feel more positive about the brand."	.854		
CEF07	"The celebrity endorsement makes me more aware of the home appliance brand."	.846		
CEF10	"I can easily recall the home appliance brand because of the celebrity endorsement."	.844		

Code	Celebrity Endorsement Factors	Component		
		1	2	3
CEF04	"I believe the home appliance is of high quality because it is endorsed by this celebrity."	.839		
CEF06	"The endorsement by this celebrity increases my confidence in the product's quality."	.831		
CEF09	"I trust the recommendations made by the celebrity endorsing this home appliance."		.882	
CEF03	"The celebrity endorser appears knowledgeable about the product."		.846	
CEF02	"The celebrity endorser is attractive and appealing."		.805	
CEF13	"The celebrity endorser's personality matches well with the brand."		.786	
CEF12	"I am more likely to purchase this home appliance because it is endorsed by a celebrity I like."			.815
CEF14	"The celebrity endorsement increases my intention to buy this home appliance."			.804
CEF01	"I feel influenced by the opinions of others when a celebrity endorses a home appliance."			.733
CEF08	"The endorsement by a celebrity makes me think that others will also prefer this home appliance."			.618

*Source: SPSS Computed Output

The above table 2 is the rotated component matrix values for “Celebrity Endorsement Factors”. Rotated factor loadings are important for the interpretation of the factors (Field 2000). Since all the factor statement values are more than 0.5, all are taken for further analysis. From the above analysis, 14 statements of “Celebrity Endorsement Factors” extracted in three distinguished dimensions. In first dimension (Brand Perception dimension) component has six loaded factors (CEF05, CEF11, CEF07, CEF10, CEF04 and CEF06) the second dimension (Endorser Characteristics dimension) component has four loaded factors (CEF09, CEF03, CEF02 and CEF13), and the third dimension (Consumer Behaviour dimension) component also has four loaded factors (CEF12, CEF14, CEF01 and CEF08).

Table 3
Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Rotated Eigen Values	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Brand Perception dimension	6.942	49.585	49.585
Endorser Characteristics dimension	2.984	21.313	70.897
Consumer Behaviour dimension	1.221	8.721	79.619
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis			

*Source: SPSS Computed Output

The above table 3 is table for Total Variance Explained for “Celebrity Endorsement Factors”. The Eigen value is an explanation of a factor on the variance of observed variables. The variance which is said to be highly described helps to trim the factors in descending order. The

significant factors can only be determined if extracted and rotated values calculated from the table data are said to be meaningful. Rotation sum of squared loadings is the only data to be considered by the researcher for analysis and interpretation.

Percentage of variance explained

The percentage of variance explained by each of the factor can be computed through Eigen values. As there are 14 variables, the total variance equals hundred. Therefore the variable explained by each factor can be computed as;

$$\text{Percentage of variance} = \text{Eigen value of first factor} / \text{Sum total of the Eigen value (x) 100}$$

$$= 6.942 / 14 \times 100$$

$$= 49.585$$

The other factor variance could be computed as above mentioned formula. The total variance explained by all factors = 49.585 + 21.313 + 8.721

$$= 79.619 \text{ per cent}$$

Weighted Average – Rank – Main Problems:

Relating to the research topic, seven main problems are found to identify common issues and concerns related to celebrity endorsements. The researcher classifies the ranks in order to find out which problem is being a severe difficulty to the respondents.

Table – 4

Main Problems	Rank (From 1 to 7)							Total Weights	Weighted Average	Rank
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh			
"I find it hard to trust celebrity endorsements because they are paid to promote products."	21	14	10	18	19	16	18	468	16.71	III
"Seeing the same celebrity endorse multiple products makes the endorsements less credible."	11	21	17	16	14	17	20	480	17.14	I
"Celebrities often endorse products that do not align with their image or lifestyle."	25	17	6	18	17	17	16	448	16.00	V
"I doubt that celebrities genuinely use or believe in the products they endorse."	17	20	13	21	11	15	19	458	16.36	IV

"A scandal involving a celebrity endorser negatively impacts my perception of the endorsed product."	17	19	10	17	14	20	19	476	17.00	II
"I believe that the cost of celebrity endorsements leads to higher prices for the products."	28	19	21	19	12	10	7	374	13.36	VII
"I am skeptical of the claims made in celebrity endorsements."	22	17	16	17	19	10	15	432	15.43	VI

*Source – Primary Data

Table 4 shows the opinion about the main problems faced by the consumers. The Weighted Average formula is often used to analyse the average value of a particular set of numbers with dissimilar levels of weight.

$$\text{Weighted Average Index} = \bar{X}_w = \frac{\sum w_i X_i}{\sum w_i}$$

where \bar{X}_w = weighted item

w_i = weight of the i th item X

X_i = value of the i th item X

The consumers marked “Seeing the same celebrity endorse multiple products makes the endorsements less credible” as their main and foremost problem as it gets total weights of 480 and weighted average of 17.14 which stands first. “A scandal involving a celebrity endorser negatively impacts my perception of the endorsed product” aspect comes next as it has total weights of 476 and weighted average of 17.00. “I find it hard to trust celebrity endorsements because they are paid to promote products” and “I doubt that celebrities genuinely use or believe in the products they endorse” stays next as these have total weights of 468 and 458. Weighted average of 16.71 and 16.36 makes it to rank them as third and fourth main problems for the consumers. Problems like “Celebrities often endorse products that do not align with their image or lifestyle”, “I am skeptical of the claims made in celebrity endorsements” and “I believe that the cost of celebrity endorsements leads to higher prices for the products” cannot be neglected as these holds total weights of 448, 432, 374 and weighted average of 16.00, 15.43 and 13.36 respectively makes it easier to rank them as fifth, sixth and seventh problems to the consumers. Hence it can be inferred that, core issue for the consumers is “Seeing the same celebrity endorse multiple products makes the endorsements less credible” which is the most troublesome problem for them.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the present study on celebrity endorsements and their influence on consumer brand preference for home appliances, here are six practical recommendations:

- **Select Endorsers Strategically:** Choose celebrities whose image and values align closely with those of the home appliance brand. This alignment enhances credibility and authenticity, positively influencing consumer perceptions.
- **Ensure Consistency in Messaging:** Maintain consistency in how the celebrity endorser is portrayed across various marketing channels. This consistency reinforces brand identity and strengthens consumer recall.
- **Monitor Consumer Sentiment:** Regularly monitor consumer feedback and sentiment towards the celebrity endorsement campaigns. This helps in assessing effectiveness and making necessary adjustments to optimize impact.

- Utilize Social Media Effectively: Leverage social media platforms to amplify the reach and engagement of celebrity endorsements. Encourage interactive content that fosters consumer interaction and feedback.
- Measure Impact on Purchase Behaviour: Conduct detailed analysis to measure the direct impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase behaviour. Utilize metrics such as sales data, consumer surveys, and online analytics to gauge effectiveness.
- Explore Diverse Endorsers: Consider using a diverse range of celebrities, including local influencers and industry experts, to appeal to different consumer segments. This approach can broaden brand appeal and resonate with varied demographics.

Implementing these recommendations can enhance the efficacy of celebrity endorsements in influencing consumer brand preferences for home appliances, thereby optimizing marketing strategies and maximizing consumer engagement.

CONCLUSION

Celebrity endorsements hold significant power in shaping consumer brand preferences, particularly in the home appliance sector. This study has explored how the credibility, attractiveness, and emotional connection that celebrities bring to a brand can enhance brand awareness, perceived quality, and consumer purchase intentions. Through a combination of strategic celebrity selection, authentic and engaging campaigns, and continuous monitoring and adaptation, brands can effectively harness the influence of celebrity endorsements to stand out in a competitive market. The practical recommendations provided - ranging from leveraging cross-media campaigns to implementing long-term endorsement deals - offer a comprehensive approach to maximizing the impact of celebrity endorsements. It is evident that when executed thoughtfully, celebrity endorsements can create a strong, positive association between consumers and home appliance brands, ultimately driving brand loyalty and increasing sales. As the market continues to evolve, brands must remain agile, leveraging insights from market research and consumer feedback to refine their strategies and maintain the efficacy of their endorsement campaigns.

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